



## Towards pro-poor adaptation to climate change in the urban centres of low- and middle-income countries

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### Abstract:

To date, the need to begin addressing climate change risks in the urban areas of low- and middle-income countries is not appreciated fully by most governments and the majority of development and disaster specialists (Satterthwaite et al. 2007). Low- and middle-income countries not only account for nearly three quarters of the world's urban population (United Nations 2008), but also have most of the urban populations at greatest risk from the increased intensity and/or frequency of storms, flooding, landslides, and heat waves that climate change is bringing or will bring (United Nations 2008; Wilbanks et al. 2007). Since 1950, there has been a sevenfold increase in their urban populations. This increase also has brought an increased concentration of people and economic activities in low-lying coastal zones at risk from sea-level rise and extreme weather events (McGranahan, Balk, and Anderson 2007). Globally, most deaths from disasters related to extreme weather occur in these countries, with a large and growing proportion of such deaths in urban areas (UN-Habitat 2007). Low- and middle-income countries also have much less adaptive capacity than do high-income countries because of backlogs in protective infrastructure and services as well as local government limitations. This problem is compounded by the unwillingness of many city and municipal governments to work with the residents of informal settlements, even though these settlements often house a third or more of the population and include those people who are most at risk from climate change. The limits in local governments' adaptive capacities have led to recognition of the importance of adaptive capacity for low-income individuals, households, and communities within these settlements. Equally, it has led to recognition of the need to support initiatives that build household and community resilience and that adapt assets and capabilities so that they are able to cope with climate change. Thus, addressing the social dimensions of climate change adaptation requires that we consider the roles not only of different levels of government but also of individuals, households, and civil society organizations. This chapter seeks to address these issues by outlining a framework of pro-poor asset adaptation for climate change. This framework provides a conceptual approach for identifying the asset vulnerability to climate change of low-income individuals, households, and communities; and it considers how assets can support adaptation. Such an approach recognizes that strengthening the asset base of low-income households and communities also can contribute to building more competent, accountable local governments. A substantial part of adaptive capacity relates to the ability of local communities to make demands on local governments and, wherever possible, to work in partnership with them.

**Source:** <http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/10564IIED.pdf>

### Resource Description

# Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

## **Exposure :**

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Unspecified Exposure

## **Geographic Feature:**

resource focuses on specific type of geography

Ocean/Coastal, Urban

## **Geographic Location:**

resource focuses on specific location

Global or Unspecified

## **Health Impact:**

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

General Health Impact

## **Mitigation/Adaptation:**

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

## **Population of Concern:** A focus of content

## **Population of Concern:**

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Children, Low Socioeconomic Status

**Other Vulnerable Population:** women

## **Resource Type:**

format or standard characteristic of resource

Research Article

## **Resilience:**

capacity of an individual, community, or institution to dynamically and effectively respond or adapt to shifting climate impact circumstances while continuing to function

A focus of content

## **Timescale:**

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified

## **Vulnerability/Impact Assessment:**

resource focus on process of identifying, quantifying, and prioritizing vulnerabilities in a system

A focus of content